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## **The Fight goes on! Intersections of Oppression in the Spanish Feminist Movement**

By Adriana Sandu<sup>1</sup>, Victoria Pérez Fernández<sup>2</sup>

### **Abstract**

This article provides a critical exploration of alliances amongst women's groups within the feminist movement in Spain during and prior to the International Women's Day strike on the 8<sup>th</sup> of March, 2018. The main focus of the article is on the Spanish feminist fight against gender violence, aiming to understand how this debate is framed, who makes the claims, and what structural inequalities are being preserved in this process. Following on from previous work on this topic, it aims to identify positions of power and privilege within the feminist movement in Spain. Drawing on social movement theory as well as intersectionality theory, it examines activism, participation and voice in the preparation of the strike. Using critical frame analysis, this article offers a critique to meanings of participation, voice and sisterhood solidarity as represented in the discourse, focusing on two cases of gender violence that drew media attention in Spain in 2018. It attempts to capture voice and representation as illustrated in various online campaigns and national media in response to these cases. The analysis shows that the mainstream feminist discourse in Spain still lacks key mechanisms to include ethnic minority and migrant women. The article suggests that new alliances need to develop inside the Spanish feminist movement, to reach across the divides of class, religion, ethnicity, country of origin, disability and sexuality and develop inclusive policies for all women.

*Keywords:* International Women's Day, Spanish feminism, Ethnic minorities, Strike participation.

### **Introduction**

In March 2018, Spain was the focus of international media attention due to a historically unprecedented feminist mobilisation during the strike and protests organised on the International Women's Day (IWD) of 8<sup>th</sup> of March. (New York Times, 2018; El País, 2018a; b; The Guardian, 2018; Le Monde, 2018). Prior to the event, approximately 400 mainstream feminist groups formed a coalition called Commission 8M, which coordinated events and protests across Spain. The Commission published a Manifesto (8M), stating key political claims on issues such as gender violence and gender equality. Nonetheless, the international media attention failed to observe the lack of representation of ethnic minority groups within the feminist movement. In Madrid, for

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example, Afroféminas, a black feminist organization, explained that they did not take part in the IWD strike because they did not feel represented by the strike's manifesto, or by the Spanish mainstream feminist discourse in general (2018a).

Ten years after similar critiques were raised in relation to representation within the Spanish feminist movement (Predelli et al., 2012; Sandu 2013), this paper stresses that new strategies need to be identified for including minority women in the feminist debate. Representation of ethnic minority and immigrant women has been problematic in Spain for many years, especially in relation to political participation in developing gender equality policies or legislative measures to address gender violence. The first law issued to address gender violence, enacted in 2004, makes little reference to immigrant and ethnic minority women (Sandu, 2013). This article follows up from previous critiques of the Spanish feminist movement, examining whiteness and sisterhood solidarity in Spain (Predelli et al, 2012; Sandu 2013) and argues that inclusion and representation of minority women in the majority women's feminist debate is still problematic. Similar to the second wave feminist critique of mainstream feminist movements representing mainly white, middle class women, the Spanish feminist discourse in Spain speaks for middle-class, white women, with an acute lack of representation of ethnic and minority women within the movement (Mbomío, 2018; Afroféminas, 2018b, Sandu 2013).

The first part of the article provides a background, highlighting aspects of political influence that hindered or facilitated the fight against gender violence in the last 30 years. It will also discuss issues of frame alignment and movement participation drawing on social movement theory (McAdams and Scott 2005; Snow & Benford 1988; 2000) as well as intersectionality theory (Collins, 2000; Crenshaw, 1989; 1991) to highlight women's different types of oppressions.

The second part of the article describes the methodology used. We used critical frame analysis, as developed by Bacchi (1999, 2005) in 'What's the problem represented to be?' (WPR). Frame alignment and movement participation refer to both opportunities and constraints to take part in particular discourses and debates. The WPR approach highlights how the debate continues to be framed and by whom and allows us to see who is left out of these debates. We examined articles published online in Spain during and after the campaign, using a wide range of sources. Paying attention to representation in the media will allow us to understand how ethnic minority women are positioned within the wider Spanish feminist movement. The aim is to highlight the dynamic within the feminist movement in Spain, trying to understand why structural inequalities still exist in contemporary debates.

The discussion and analysis will constitute the third part of the paper. It will focus on meanings attributed to sisterhood solidarity as evoked through the events that occurred in early 2018 when two cases of gender violence re-ignited the feminist movement in Spain, leading to the feminist strike. We then conclude that new ways are needed to improve alliances and cooperation among women within the Spanish feminist movement, to include a diverse set of feminist practices along with the traditional fight against patriarchy.

### **Political Influence in the Spanish Feminist Movement**

In the last three decades, the development of gender policies in Spain has been influenced by the two major political parties. Under the Spanish Socialist Labour Party (PSOE) a strong gender machinery developed as part of the state feminism, widely promoting gender equality policies in Spain (Bustelo, 2009; 2016). Several women-friendly institutions were created, such as the Women's Institute, (*Instituto de la Mujer*). This marked the beginning of the institutionalisation

of the women's movement in 1983 (Threlfall, 2007). Following Spain's accession to the European Union in 1986, Spanish gender policies and the women's movement continued to grow. After the creation of the European Women's Lobby in 1990, the Spanish European Women's Lobby (CELEM) was created in March 1993, as an umbrella organisation, funded mainly with European money (Sandu et al., 2009).

During the conservative years through the 1990s, improvements on gender equality issues were slow. State feminism continued to develop only when the socialist government returned to power (2004 through 2011). Several achievements to women's rights were enacted then, such as parity government – the first time for complete parity in the Spanish Cabinet; reforms of the Civil Code allowing homosexual marriage (July 2005), the National Equality Law (2007) and changes to Female Genital Mutilation law (2003). Among the most important achievement was the development of the Gender Violence Law (1/2004). After being re-elected in 2008, the socialist government continued to develop gender policies in Spain, including changes to the much-contested abortion law (2010) (Sandu, 2013). However, after the conservative government (Partido Popular, PP) followed in 2011, many of the PSOE's achievements have been slowly disappearing (Bustelo, 2016: 110). PP has been also been attempting to undermine the law fighting gender violence, another for gender equality and one for LGBT rights, arguing these all discriminate against men (Euroactiv, 2019). The standstill gender equality policies during the PP years, especially the attempt to replace the 2010 abortion law by a more restrictive one, has in fact sparked the 2018 IWD feminist movement leading to strikes and protests all over the country (El País, 2018b). Street protests in Madrid captured the international media attention as the first nationwide women's strike for gender equality was called. Similar demonstrations were held in over 200 other Spanish cities.

### **Theories of Social Movement and Intersectionality**

This article draws on social movement theory discussing issues of frame alignment and movement participation (McAdams and Scott 2005; Snow & Benford 1988). It also uses intersectionality theories to critique the Spanish feminist movement and its use of sisterhood solidarity, which fails to identify the complex and diverse experiences of minority women that often lead to multiple points of oppression (Collins, 2000; Crenshaw, 1989, 1991).

Collective action frames vary depending on how exclusive or inclusive they are in relation to the number of ideas they incorporate and articulate as part of a discourse. When collective action frames are inclusive or flexible enough, they act as “master frames”. The level of inclusion of master frames also determines if they change or stay the same (Snow & Benford, 2000: 614). When a master frame is not inclusive enough or inconsistent it can lead to visible contradictions among beliefs and claims, or to contradictions between the frame and the tactical actions, i.e. contradictions between what the social movement says and does (Snow and Benford, 2000: 619). This is linked to what Bacchi (1999) calls problem representation. Migrant and ethnic minority women's identities cross the boundaries of traditionally accepted dynamics, and the complexity of their experience seems to be neglected when gender violence is discussed within the Spanish women's movement. They stand at a focal point of exclusion, where ethnicity/race and gender, and nationality/immigration status intersect, forming a similar ‘matrix of oppression’ to what Collins (2000) described for black women in the United States. Similarly, majority women activists in Spain continue to focus only on certain dimensions of feminism, challenging the

subordination of women or gender hierarchies (Mazur, 2008), without intersecting them with race, class or other inequalities women experience (Sandu 2013).

Gender studies research in Spain have been focused on three main topics: gender discrimination in the labour market, violence against women, and queer issues, mostly written in relation to majority women, with the exception of a few studies that critique the lack of voice and representation of ethnic and migrant women in the majority women debate (Predelli et al. 2012, Sandu 2013). Although ethnic minority women started organizing in different groups in the 1980s, their demands are rarely found in the Spanish feminist academic literature, which tends to represent them as victims (Campani et. al., 2006) or regarding their position in the labour market, as part of the low-paid, low-skill sector, such as domestic care or the underground economy (Gil, 2011; Goñalons Pons & Marx Ferree 2014). These studies also draw attention to the discrimination they face in their everyday life, due to an unequal power relationship in these jobs. Some scholars, such as Bustelo (2009, 2016), Mendez Platero (2007), Expósito Molina (2012) and Forest and Mendez Platero (2008) identify the need for an intersectionality approach to designing and implementing gender policies, with a focus on the needs of ethnic minority and migrant women. This article is aiming to identify points of resistance within the movement and understand where these alliances can begin to be formed. The next section will discuss our methodological approach.

## Methodology

To understand the current dynamic of the feminist discourse and the different interpretations of gender equality within this discourse, we looked at how migrant and ethnic minority women are represented in the social media (blogs, campaign websites) and on national media (newspapers, magazines). We used a wide range of secondary data, based on documents available online. The main document that we analysed is the feminist Manifesto (8M), designed by 400 feminist groups prior to 8<sup>th</sup> of March 2018. It states the key claims underpinning the feminist strike in Spain. While this was not a systematic review of all media reports for this period, we used the following inclusion criteria for selecting the media articles: date (we selected articles published between January and June 2018); geographic location (Spain); type of publication (non-peer review articles, news, reports in the mainstream media and feminist magazines); topic (cases of gender violence in Spain and the media debates following those cases).

Articles from a selection of feminist online magazines were included, for example *Pikara Magazine*, considered to be one of the most diverse feminist platforms. The magazines were scanned regularly during the time of data collection to identify key elements of the feminist discourse, debates and key actors involved in the campaign. Online forums represent an increasingly active space for dialogue among feminist activists in Spain. The contributors are usually the readers but also activists or journalist. We used key terms such as ethnic minority, otherness, and sisterhood solidarity; also, we paid attention to silences in these debates.

News articles were examined as they appeared on national online forums; national newspapers such as *El País*, *El Mundo*, *El Diario*, especially those reporting on gender violence and any subsequent debates, protests and events related to the Spanish feminist movement. We paid attention to language used in relation to intersectionality, in particular participation and voice of ethnic minority women. As previous research shows intersectionality is rarely understood by the mainstream feminist discourse in Spain, which is mainly framed by majority (Spanish) women (Sandu 2013). This paper aims to understand the power structures within the feminist movement, especially those power relations that intercede in the claim-making process of ethnic majority and

minority women. Violence against women, including sexual violence and women's reproductive rights, is one of the most important subjects both in academic research and in political debates. Political influence enhanced the agency of majority women's claims, but it also revealed that class, ethnicity, disability, religion and sexual orientation are often presumed secondary to gender equality by majority women leading the women's movement (Sandu et. al. 2009: 27). In our analysis, we examined how notions of "sisterhood solidarity" as well as notions of "otherness" were represented in the media during the campaign and protests of 8M 2018 and discuss implications to representation and voice of ethnic minority women in the feminist movement.

### **Discussion: The Manifesto 8M, Intersectionality and Sisterhood Solidarity**

The Manifesto 8M is the main document that states the claims underpinning the feminist strike in Spain. It reflects the political claims made by different women's organizations in Spain during the preparation of the feminist strike on 8<sup>th</sup> of March 2018. The Manifesto 8M comes with a 5-page long mission statement (*argumentario*), which stresses the importance of the feminist strike as well as detailed political claims made by the women's movement in Spain. One of the main objectives of the Manifesto is to fight gender violence (Coordinadora feminista, 2018). It was developed by women from different political, social and educational backgrounds, as part of the new organisation that evolved prior to the event, called *Comisión 8M*. The aim was to include all women, believed to be equal and sharing a common goal. At the start, they held two meetings with more than 400 women from different organizations from all over the country (El País, 2018b). However not all organizations were able to attend. June Fernandez, journalist and feminist activist, discussed how immigrant or ethnic minority women were not equally involved in the debate; more specifically she claims that they were not interviewed on the occasion of the strike. Issues of racism or trans people's rights are still understood as a different topic from feminist claims. The need to maintain an audience holds the mainstream media back from raising a voice for ethnic minority women's issues because they consider they are not easily explainable. June Fernandez further argues that: "*it is not possible to explain what the patriarchy is and how it functions if we only take into account the interpretation of privileged and normative women*" (Pikara Magazine, 2018). Lucía Mbombio, journalist and feminist activist, also argues that:

*"when the state speaks about "women", it refers to those who are white, cisgender and heteronormative, because for the rest of us there is always an adjective attached to it. We do not have the right just to be "women", but we are trans, Black, Latina... women"* (Pikara Magazine, 2018).

The 8M refers to sisterhood solidarity as its main tool to frame the action, asserting that "sisterhood is our weapon". Following on, it states that:

*"the feminist Spanish strike is the continuation of a tradition of feminist activists, suffragists and unionists that were part of the Spanish history, from the ones who fought in the Spanish Civil War against the dictatorship to those who struggled against colonialism and were involved in the anti-imperialists battles"*<sup>3</sup> (Coordinadora Feminista, 2018).

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<sup>3</sup> Authors' translation.

This statement creates a tension from the onset, as a discourse based on history immediately excludes women whose roots are elsewhere. The concept of “sisterhood” emerged during the second wave feminist movement to appeal for the creation of solidary ties among women, independently of their differences. Sisterhood solidarity draws on the assumption that women’s shared experiences and common interests overcome other life experiences. However, this concept ignores the complexity and plurality of identities as discussed by intersectional feminists such as Collins (2000) and Crenshaw (1989, 1991). Intersectionality theory is therefore useful in understanding how women position themselves with regard to each other.

The main vectors of oppression identified within the Manifesto are patriarchy and capitalism, with a clear approach to embrace sisterhood solidarity:

*“Our identity is multiple, we are diverse. We live in the countryside and in the city, we work in the market and as caretakers. We are white, Roma, migrants, and women of colour. Our ages are diverse, and we are lesbians, trans, bisexual, inter, queer, straight... We are the ones who are still here, and we are the murdered ones, we are the incarcerated. We are all the women” (Coordinadora feminista, 2018).*

Intersectionality is partly adopted in the 8M, stating that being a woman is the first cause of poverty and that women are being punished for their diversity: ‘precarity is worsened for those women who are older, immigrant or ethnic minority’. Other such statements are: “No woman is illegal. We say ENOUGH! to racism” (Manifesto 8M, Hacialahuelgafeminista, 2018).

However ethnic minority activists in the country have contested these claims for inclusion and argued that 8M lacks specificity and it thus conceals a clear claim about the intersection of gender, race, and class. For instance, Ayomide Zuri (Afroféminas, 2018b), speaks about the “amnesia” in the document in relation to domestic workers in Spain, who are mostly immigrant and/or ethnic minority women. Ayomide Zuri also points out other important issues that have been overlooked, such as the double burden that women of colour bear in situations of violence against women, as they are more likely to suffer it but less likely to be believed by the authorities. They also argue that the high percentage of ethnic and migrant women involved in prostitution and trafficking is not addressed by the feminist discourse in Spain (Afroféminas, 2018c). Migrant and ethnic minority women encounter additional difficulties when looking for jobs due to structural racism (United explanations, 2018). According to Paula Guerra, a Chilean feminist activist living in Madrid, racism is the main form of oppression for immigrant and ethnic minority women in Spain, still represented as “the other”. She claims that this is still an obstacle to accessing good jobs or even political influence (El Diario, 2018a).

Placing racism at the margins of the mainstream feminist discourse in the 8M Manifesto, reduces women diversity and renders the struggles of immigrant or ethnic minority women invisible. When mainstream feminist claims do not include class and race, it leaves out of the equation some key aspects of inequality, and thus crucial issues for ethnic minority women remain unresolved. Similarly, the main issues stated in the 8M overshadow aspects of the experience of migrant and ethnic minority women in relation to racism. Being silent in the debate excludes them from the writing process and their role in Spanish feminist activism becomes insignificant.

Despite the fact that sisterhood solidarity is mentioned in the 8M manifesto as one of its main goals, the way in which it is applied, suggests a hegemonic discourse, still embedded in universalist notions of sisterhood. It shows an attempt to unify the fight for gender equality, avoiding to explicitly show how this struggle includes many other experiences (Afroféminas,

2018). The manifesto does not reflect a full understanding of the interrelation among different aspects of inequalities, which according to Choo & Marx Ferree (2010) can further stress the influence racism has in gender and class discrimination. The concept of sisterhood thus becomes a “buzzword” (Cornwall, 2010), a word empty of meaning when it comes to mobilize and guide collective action in the political arena (Afroféminas, 2018c). When terms such as patriarchy or sisterhood are used without historical context and specification, assuming a universal applicability, it is also a way of silencing relations of dominance and exploitation (Mohanty, 1991: 67).

The feminist master frame is not sufficiently robust as it has been struggling to accommodate both racism and feminist issues. According to Snow & Benford (2000: 619) this shows that there are contradictions in the beliefs present in the master frame. Similarly, intersectionality is briefly reflected in the mainstream discourse, as shown in the Manifesto 8M. However, an intersectional approach is not reflected in the application of the movement and its tactical actions. Afroféminas (2018b), in their statement explaining why they were not participating in the feminist strike, argued that “despite the shy attempt of inclusivity in the 8M manifesto, facts are stronger than words, and the truth is that “the ‘invisibility’ of ethnic minority women now is almost absolute”. The reality of white middle-class women is used as the base of every analysis, whereas the reality of other groups of women, including women with disabilities, is treated as a separate issue (Morris, 1993: 58). This is also a common critique raised by ethnic minority women’s groups in Spain. Both the Manifesto 8M and the campaign precluding the feminist strike are examples of how majority women are still the main actors in the framing process of gender issues. Issues affecting “the other” women seem to be external to the mainstream debate, such as those referring to female gender mutilation, but also gender violence within certain ethnic groups, for example within the Roma communities, being considered as something that is accepted (to a certain degree) by women in those communities (Sandu, 2013).

During the campaign of IWD March 2018, women working in the domestic service and care sector, who were not able to take part in the strike, were encouraged to hang their apron on the balcony, showing that they support the strike. Such action was supposed to show that “you are with us” (El Diario, 2018b). However, as previous critiques show, this is also a way to re-produce a discourse of “us versus them”, making women whose personal experiences are affected by various axes of inequality, ‘the others’ (Mohanty, 1981; Collins, 2000, Yuval-Davis 2006). The march in Madrid also showed how the “us vs them” discourse was viewed by some ethnic minority women’s organizations. Led by the Black Feminist association EFAE, there was a racialized divided section within the march in Madrid in which only women of colour, including trans and non-binary people, were allowed. This section was meant to show a protest within the protest against the structural racism in Spain and the invisibility of immigrant and ethnic minority women. The EFAE’s tweet that created this section translates as: “*Ain’t we women? The EFAE joins the march in a racial divide section. March with your sisters for an intersectional feminism*” (Twitter EFAE, 2018). However, this statement was not discussed in mainstream media, despite the large-scale media coverage received overall for the mainstream march held in Madrid.

### *Two Cases of Gender Violence: Different Responses?*

One of the main purposes of the protests of the IWD on 8M 2018 was to strike against all forms of violence (feminicidio.net, 2018). In previous years, several cases of sexual violence in Spain, such as “La Manada” gang rape (El País, 2018 a, c) and the murder of the 18-year-old “Diana Quer” (El País, 2018c, d, e) have been especially followed by the feminist movement and the mainstream media. The ‘othering’ of immigrant and ethnic minority women within the



women's movements in Spain can also be identified by how media responds to certain events. In the aftermath of the strike of 8<sup>th</sup> of March 2018, the media in Spain has helped the feminist movement by reporting against cases such as the "La Manada". For example, when the court reduced this sentence from rape to sexual assault, dozens of marches were organized in a few hours in various cities all over the country (Blasting News, 2018). The mobilization of the women's movements was overwhelming; however, it was led by white feminist organizations impacting on news release in different mainstream media services.

Immigrant and ethnic minority activists argued that reactions to cases of sexual violence are treated differently by the media depending on the victims' ethnic or migrant status (Afroféminas, 2018c). They argued that cases where the victims are migrant or ethnic minority women are debated less in the media and on national level campaigns led by majority, white, Spanish activists. There is especially one case that has triggered these critiques, the case of workplace harassment and sexual abuse suffered by dozens of immigrant female workers employed to collect strawberries in Andalucía (Correctiv.org, 2018). The strawberry workers had attempted to make complaints against the extensive and consistent abuse that had been going on for years, but they have been silenced and the accusations classified as false. Recently, more women gathered the courage to go forward with formal complaints (Público, 2018). This case highlights the vulnerability of poor and sometimes illegal migrant women who work in the agriculture sector in precarious conditions, exposed to violence and abuse, without any employment protection. Despite its complexity in terms of women's multiple intersections of oppression, this case had a much lower response in terms of mobilization and protest in the Spanish feminist movement and consequently on the national mainstream news channels. The marches organized to support and defend the strawberry workers were considerably fewer in comparison with the national wave of support received by "La Manada" case, where the victim was a white, Spanish woman. A few protests were organized by the feminist organisation Mujeres24h in Huelva (Andalusia), where the case happened, and only reached Madrid with a march organized by the anti-racist organization Red de Acogida (Canal Sur, 2018).

The difference in response illustrates a critical tension in the Spanish feminist movement, showing that migrant and ethnic minority women are still viewed as outsiders. Following the event, Antoinette Torres Soler, director of Afroféminas, stated:

"The white feminist organizations did everything possible to mobilize their supporters after the update in "La Manada" case. We celebrate this mobilization, but they were not as proactive to support the strawberry workers from Huelva, which shows that their agenda, is not ours" (Afroféminas, 2018c).

This resonates with what Collins argues when she discusses 'the sides' feminist women take in a discourse. She states that: "each group identifies the oppression with which it feels most comfortable with as being fundamental and classifies all others as being of lesser importance" (2000: 287). When the victim is a majority woman, the profile of the victim makes it easier for the majority women to identify the victimisation, organise and fight against the violence. However, when the victim is a minority woman, the mobilization of majority women is not as effective because these women are still considered as "the other" (Puigvert, 2001).

Some ethnic minority women's organizations in Spain are well structured and organized with a relatively long history. The first such organizations in Spain were formed in the late 1980s and early 1990s by migrant women from Latin America. Other organizations, such as the Roma

women's organization Roma Serseni or the mixed organization Opañel, have been functioning since 1991, despite the fact that Roma population has been present in Spain for centuries. However, when it comes to claims-making, Roma women's concerns have traditionally fallen in between the women's movement discourse, focused in gender equality without a strong intersectional approach, and the minority Roma organizations led by men focused on minority rights, diversity, inclusion and antidiscrimination more generally (Sandu, 2013). Ethnic minority women, have been pioneers in bridging the agendas of women's movements and anti-racist organizations in Spain. New organisations such as Afroféminas, Gitanas Feministas por la Diversidad (Roma feminists for diversity), or Red Latinas (Latina Network) are actively promoting an intersectional approach within the Spanish feminist movement, mainly via online platforms. Roma feminists also organise anti-racist seminars as well as lectures on diversity and feminist activism among Roma women (Sordé Martí, et.al. 2012: 1239). Nevertheless, Roma women are still framed as "the others" by more influential actors in the Spanish debate, who claim that Roma women are usually passive agents (Sordé Martí at al. 2012; Sandu, 2013).

### **Conclusion: Tensions in the Representation in the Spanish Feminist Movement**

This paper argues that minority women's movements have filled the space in between gender and racial debates, focusing on issues that combine gender, ethnic and racial inequalities, advocating for an intersectional approach. It showed that in the Spanish context, once racism enters in the gender and discrimination debate, the mainstream media treats it as a different topic (Pikara Magazine, 2018). For example, during and after the feminist strike on the IWD, the mainstream media focused only on the issues linked to the gender pay gap and sexual harassment in the workplace. Newspapers and TV channels invited Spanish majority women to speak about these issues. June Fernandez, journalist and feminist activist, claims that "there was little to no mention in the mainstream media to the heteronormative and capitalist system that the organisers of the strike wanted to call out" (idem). At the same time, she highlighted the absence of immigrant or ethnic minority women interviewed on the occasion of the strike.

The media approaches the feminist issues with a parcelled-up vision, reflected in the mainstream feminist discourse. Issues of racism or trans people's rights are still considered different from feminist claims. According to June Fernandez: "it is not possible to explain what the patriarchy is and how it functions if we only take into account the interpretation of privileged women" (Pikara Magazine, 2018). Lucía Mbombio, journalist and feminist activist, states:

"when the state speaks about "women", it refers to those who are white, cisgender and heteronormative, because for the rest of us there is always an adjective attached to it. We do not have the right just to be "*women*", but we are *trans, Black, Latina... women*" (Pikara Magazine, 2018).

Immigrant and ethnic minority women are largely unrepresented in the feminist Spanish movement. In the political arena, it is only in the recent years that ethnic minority women have had representation in Congress. Najat Driouech, the first Muslim deputy woman in Catalunya (La Vanguardia, 2018), María José Jiménez, president of Asociacion Gitanas Feministas por la Diversidad and deputy in Salamanca (El Diario, 2015), or Rita Bosaho, the first black deputy of Congress in Spain, are some examples of ethnic minority female politicians. The lack of political and institutional representation of migrant and ethnic minorities in Spain is one of the main

critiques that these women politicians are voicing. They claim that there are not enough opportunities for organizations like Roma Serseni, Afrofeminas and EFAE to make their claims. As a result, their role as signifying agents is diminished and they are perceived as recipients of state policies, and not as active participants. This critique is present in many immigrant and ethnic minority women's organizations. Carmen Fernandez, Vice-president of Gitanas Feministas por la Diversidad states: "One of our main political causes as Roma feminists are making politicians understand that Roma people have to stop being the object of social projects and start being the active subject in them" (El Español, 2017).

The otherization of ethnic minority women's organizations by the state also influences their role in the dialogue, design, and implementation of gender equality policies. Compared to majority women's organizations, they do not have access to the same spaces of participation and are not consulted by the state when it comes to gender policy issues (Predelli et. al. 2012).

One of the main critiques of Spanish ethnic minority feminist activists is the necessity to decolonize the feminist philosophy in the country through the diffusion of black, Roma, Muslim, and Latin American women's cosmovision and feminist philosophies (El Diario, 2018b). Following Afshar & Maynard (2000: 809), immigrant and ethnic minority women's critique points out the necessity of building and spread their "histories" to subvert the discourse of otherization that many women's groups bear in western countries such as Spain. The importance of these philosophies and histories lies in their uniqueness. They re-present the particular life experiences of immigrant and ethnic minority women in Spain, since they fall in between other discourses, as it is the case of antiracist discourses, usually led by men; or the traditional feminist discourses, led by white women; or in the class discourse, where race and ethnicity are not fully accounted for. June Fernandez writes in relation to the outcomes of the IWD's strike:

*"it is essential for us all to understand that speak about racism is not a different issue from speaking about gender. Patriarchy, colonialism, and neo-colonialism are not disconnected entities, but the pillars of a complex system of power"* (Pikara Magazine, 2018).

In order to spread different counterhegemonic discourses in the Spanish feminist agenda, it is essential to create the base for sustainable strategic alliances that properly understand the implications of the intersectional approach, able to surpass the vague concept of sisterhood solidarity. In her work with ethnic minority women in the Basque country, Goikoetxe (2016) argues that Spanish feminism can be improved by including a wider diversity of practices that women around the world have developed in order to survive and fight patriarchy and thus form new, stronger alliances. Some ethnic minority women's organisations, such as Romí, the first Roma women's organisation in Spain, claim that it is necessary to create alliances among majority and minority women and use the moments of crisis within the women's movements as a way to make it more inclusive (Fernández, D., 2011: 5). Acknowledging the historically and co-determined character of different axes of inequality may result in a better understanding of the white privilege embedded in the women's movement in Spain, as well as the lack of an intersectional approach in the Spanish mainstream feminist discourse (Choo & Marx Ferree, 2010: 129).

This paper has considered what and how structural inequalities are being reproduced in the framing process of the contemporary debate about feminist issues in Spain. To do so, we have analysed the elements related to intersectionality and representation in the mainstream feminist

discourse, using the case study the 2018 feminist strike. These events are a good example of how the women's movements in Spain are organized since its results have been polarised depending on the perspective used to assess them. On the one hand, the feminist strike has been considered a huge success for most feminists and mainstream media in the country (The Guardian, 2018; El País, 2018a; El Diario, 2018a). On the other hand, several ethnic minority women's organizations claimed that the 2018 WID strike did not use an intersectional approach in terms of its political claims and representation and has therefore left out several groups of women out of the debate (Afroféminas, 2018b).

We have used critical frame analysis to understand the mainstream feminist discourse in Spain and its inclusion of ethnic minority women's organizations. Our findings are as follows. First, we argued that the mainstream feminist discourse in Spain accommodates the women-of colour and postcolonial critiques in its political claims only in part. This is based on the analysis of the Manifesto 8M in relation to the inclusion of an intersectional approach and the usage of the sisterhood solidarity concept. Although ethnic and minority women are included in the Manifesto 8M for the feminist strike, they seem to be secondary to issues such as employment, gender equality or class. Sisterhood solidarity is contested and used as part of a universalist discourse that makes invisible the importance of race and ethnicity as axes of inequality (Afroféminas, 2018b).

Second, we point out that silences in the media and in mainstream feminist discourse are a sign of how immigrant and ethnic minority women are "othered". This is based on the type of reactions recorded in the news to the two gender violence events, such as "La Manada" case (El País, 2018c) and "Las temporeras" case (Correctiv.org, 2018). In these cases, the Spanish feminist master frame shows weakness in combining its values with its tactical actions (Snow & Benford, 2000: 619). Thus, when the victim is a majority woman, the women's movements is quickly organized because the profile of the victim makes it easy for them to identify the victimization and feel represented by it. However, this process of identification and representation that lead to political action does not happen as quickly and effectively when victims are ethnic minority women (Collins 2000: 287).

Third, although it could be argued that this lack of representation is due to the weak organization and structure of ethnic minority women's organizations, their relatively long history, and good structure demonstrates that this is not the case. Using the example of Roma women's organizations in Spain, who have been in the country for centuries and have developed well-structured networks, we argue that the lack representation is a consequence of the country's structural racism. Despite being organized, certain ethnic minority women's groups cannot forward their demands as much as majority women do, as they do not have the same opportunities to access the mainstream media or the government (Sandu, 2013). More recently, organizations like Roma Serseni in Madrid have been involved in European projects supporting like the Pal.eu project, on wider Roma anti-discrimination, integration and employment issues (Pal.eu.project), while they remain at the periphery of the feminist debate in Spain.

Fourth, we suggest that the ethnic minority women's philosophies should be used as a way of constructing a counterhegemonic discourse that may counteract the racist tradition in European majority feminism. Recognising both issues of feminism and racism is an essential pre-step in the creation of strategic bridges based on strategic solidarity in the Spanish women's movements. This paper suggests that new feminist alliances should identify the positions of power that exist in particular contexts and address gender and race inequalities emerging from such positions. Through the recognition of these historical roots of today's white privilege within the women's movements, it is possible to acknowledge the historically and co-determined character of

inequalities. This may then lead to more representation and voice the in the Spanish mainstream feminist discourse, following an intersectional approach.

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